

### **REMARKS**

Claims 1-37 are pending in the application. Claims 13-16 (formerly mis-numbered claims 12-15) have been amended/renumbered to overcome the objections at section 1 of the Office Action. Claims 4, 5, 6, 10, and 16 have been amended to correct formalities. New claims 17-37 have been added. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the remaining rejections are requested in view of the following remarks.

The claims are directed to computer-implemented systems and methods in which an estimated duration character is displayed if a user inputs information indicating that the duration of one or more projects or tasks is estimated. By indicating that one or more durations are estimated, a user is able to display a project schedule without raising false expectations about when projects and tasks will actually be completed, which is a problem that plagues existing systems. (Specification, 1:12-14.)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Using Microsoft Project 4 for Windows* ("Pyron"). Pyron does not teach or suggest several of the claimed limitations. With respect to claim 1, Pyron does not include a user interface for receiving a duration value string that indicates whether a time period duration is estimated, as claimed. Rather, Pyron simply allows a user to enter a duration, such as "45d," without any indication of whether or not that duration is an estimate. (Pyron, p. 325 and Fig. 12.7.) The "d" in "45d" refers to "days."

While Pyron indicates that revised duration "estimates" may be entered by a user (Pyron, p. 341), there is no mechanism for allowing a user to indicate that such durations are in fact estimated. Thus, when durations entered by a user in Pyron's system are viewed by others, the viewers cannot determine whether the durations are estimated or definite, because the inputting user cannot choose to display whether the durations are estimated or definite. Accordingly, there is no way for a viewer of the scheduled project durations to determine whether the durations are estimated or definite, or to otherwise distinguish between the two types of durations.

The system of claim 1, conversely, allows a user to input a duration value string including information indicating whether a project or task duration is estimated. The

claimed system interprets the inputted duration value string, and includes a display for showing any estimated duration characters. Thus, a viewer of a project schedule can see which tasks have estimated durations and which tasks have definite durations. Accordingly, the viewer will not have false expectations regarding when a project or task will be completed.

Additionally, Pyron does not disclose a parser for separating a duration value string so that it can be interpreted, as recited in claim 1. The Examiner believes Pyron's page break function corresponds to such a parser. (Pyron, p. 448.) This page break function, however, is merely a tool allowing a user to force a page break between specific tasks or resources when printing a task list or resource list. (Pyron, p. 448:1-3.) The page break function is not a parser for separating a duration value string, as claimed, but is simply a mechanism by which a user can specify where page breaks will occur when printing a list. Additionally, there is no suggestion in Pyron to use such a parser, since estimated duration characters cannot be inputted in Pyron's system, so there is no motivation to separate an estimated duration character from the remainder of a duration value string.

Pyron also does not disclose a display for showing an estimated duration character, as recited in claim 1, since Pyron displays only duration values, and does not receive, interpret, or display estimated duration characters. Accordingly, several of the limitations of claim 1 are entirely absent from Pyron, and claim 1 and the claims depending therefrom are believed to be allowable.

With respect to claim 4, Pyron's system does not allow a user to enter an estimated duration character, or to check an estimated field, as claimed. Moreover, Pyron's system does not run a sheet or dialog mode to display an estimated duration value, as recited in claim 4. Indeed, Pyron does not provide any mechanism for inputting, checking, or displaying estimated duration characters. The relied upon "Selecting the Special Options for Views with Sheets" section (Pyron, pp. 454-455), simply explains how a user can select whether to view a task sheet or a resource sheet, and makes no mention of allowing a user to enter or display an estimated duration

character. Thus, several of the limitations of claim 4 are entirely absent from Pyron, and claim 4 and the claims depending therefrom are believed to be allowable.

New claims 17-37 all include limitations directed to receiving or displaying indications of estimated durations. None of the cited prior art references disclose systems or methods for receiving or displaying such indications. Accordingly, new claims 17-20 are believed to be allowable.

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that the claims are in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is, therefore, respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions or believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned at (206) 359-8548.

Respectfully submitted,

Perkins Coie LLP

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Maurice J. Pirio", is written over a horizontal line.

Maurice J. Pirio

Registration No. 33,273

Date: 6/29/04

**Correspondence Address:**

Customer No. 25096

Perkins Coie LLP

P.O. Box 1247

Seattle, Washington 98111-1247

(206) 359-8000